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DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/APN, EEB/TRA/OTP

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TAGS: ECON FAIR PTER PREL AS

SUBJECT: DHS DEPUTY SECRETARY LUTE VISIT TO AUSTRALIA

REF: CANBERRA 21

Classified By: Classified by: Political-Economic Counselor Edgard Kagan  
, Reasons 1.4 (b)(d).

**11. SUMMARY:** In January 10 meetings with Australian Transportation Minister Albanese and National Security Advisor Lewis, DHS Deputy Secretary Lute stressed the need for global cooperation to strengthen security on international flights following the attempted Christmas Day terrorist attack. D/S Lute outlined four areas of further work to enhance security: improving information sharing; enhancing technology; targeting resources to strengthen weak parts of the system; and developing mechanisms for more international cooperation. D/S Lute proposed a multilateral ministerial in the June-July timeframe, with location to be determined. National Security Advisor (NSA) Lewis suggested multilateral endorsement by the G-20, which would then enable most international cooperation to be carried out by regional bodies. Transport Minister Albanese said the recently-released National Aviation Security White Paper explicitly recognized the need for increased global consultation. As a direct-result of the attempted Christm as-day attack, Prime Minister Rudd tasked NSA Lewis to conduct a comprehensive review to ensure the Australian intelligence community can "connect the dots." Noting the success of U.S.-Australia cooperation on aviation security, D/S Lute stressed the importance of meeting with Australian officials on her global trip. This cable has been cleared by D/S Lute's senior staff. End Summary.

Meeting Participants

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**12. (SBU)** Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Deputy Secretary Jane Holl Lute met with Australian Minister of Transport Anthony Albanese and National Security Advisor Duncan Lewis on January 10. Other Australian participants included: Minister Albanese's Chief of Staff, Michael Choueifate; Office of Transport Security (OTS) Deputy Secretary Andrew Wilson; and OTS Executive Director Paul Retter. Other U.S. participants included: Charge d' Affairs Dan Clune; DHS Deputy Secretary Chief of Staff David Pressman; DHS Office of Policy Assistant Secretary David Heyman; DHS Office of General Counsel Brad Kieserman; DHS Office of International Affairs (Asia/Pacific) Matt Mooney; Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Director of International Operations Robert Rottman; and TSA Representative to Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific Jill Drury. D/S Lute's delegation also met separately with officials from the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship(DIAC), which has overall responsibility

for Australia's immigration program, including screening and immigration clearance of inbound and outbound passengers.  
Background and Agenda

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¶3. (SBU) Following the attempted Christmas Day terrorist attack on Northwest Flight 253, TSA issued directives for additional security measures for international flights to the United States, such as increased passenger pat-downs and bag searches. The DHS Deputy Secretary's delegation visited Australia as part of a two-week, 9-country, international outreach tour to Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and South America. Discussion in meetings with Australian counterparts focused on U.S. findings regarding the attempted Christmas Day terrorist attack and the resulting need for global cooperation to strengthen security on international flights.

#### Preaching to the Converted

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¶4. (C/NF) The Australians fundamentally agreed with D/S Lute's proposition that the terrorist threat is not directed at a single country and must, therefore, be addressed on a global basis. To that end, they agreed on the need for governments to work together. Minister Albanese welcomed the opportunity for an ongoing dialogue on aviation security because it is a "never-ending mission that must respond to an evolving threat." Minister Albanese made similar statements to the press on the importance of international cooperation for what is an international problem. At least three national newspapers published articles on the meeting.

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#### December 25 Incident

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¶5. (S/NF) D/S Lute said the international community has been forced to react to terrorist incidents and that terrorists are putting their best minds on finding ways to attack us. In response, she said we must collectively employ our best minds in governments, airports and airlines to counter them and break the cycle of reaction. D/S Lute provided background on the December 25 incident, beginning with the fact that Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab was largely unknown and that his first contact with Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula occurred just five months prior to the incident. Nevertheless, D/S Lute said there was enough information that U.S. authorities should have done a better job "connecting the dots" in what she described as multiple system failures. Though the nature of Abdulmutallab's recruitment is under investigation, it appears he became motivated to self-radicalize. She added the incident demonstrates terrorists' capacity to bypass security measures in one location, which can place the entire global aviation system at risk.

#### Enhancing Security

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¶6. (S) D/S Lute outlined four areas for further work to enhance security:

-- Information Sharing: Many nations are doing a good job of this bilaterally, but there is room for improvement. She cited the lack of common standards for passenger name recognition (PNR) data as an example.

-- Technology: DHS will leverage other departments, such as Defense and Energy, to accelerate development of new technology. She warned, however, that technology is not foolproof. Even the newest body scanners have an unimpressive "hit rate" on home-made explosives. DHS will evaluate the use of currently-deployed technology to ensure

the U.S. is using it to its full potential and look at ways to strengthen the human interface.

-- Strengthening weak parts of the system through resource allocation: DHS will address identified shortcomings by targeting more resources to less capable parts of the security system.

-- International cooperation: DHS recognizes the need to improve international consultation and collaboration and is seeking to identify mechanisms to further cooperation.

#### Multilateral Ministerial Proposal

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¶ 7. (S/NF) To find common cause and identify the way ahead, D/S Lute proposed a multilateral ministerial in the June-July timeframe, with location to be determined. Transport Minister Albanese was supportive of the idea as a way to reassure the public that governments are proactively working to get out in front of the terrorist threat and suggested that concrete deliverables for such an event should be identified and developed. OTS Executive Director Paul Retter suggested a regional approach, perhaps using the APEC aviation security working group or the Quadrilateral Working Group (QUAD; Australia, U.S., Canada, EU), suggesting a QUAD "plus" (with others as appropriate). He noted that in order to succeed, this effort must address national regulators, airports and airlines if it is to ensure the necessary capacity to implement and enforce aviation security standards. D/S Lute thought such regional meetings could help support the multilateral ministerial meeting.

#### Australian Initiatives

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¶ 8. (S/NF) Transport Minister Albanese mentioned that on December 16, the GOA issued a National Aviation Security White Paper, which provided a comprehensive review of aviation security. The paper, which recommended loosening of some security requirements, is being reexamined in the aftermath of December 25. The White Paper explicitly recognized the need for increased global consultation. Albanese said Australia has good regional cooperation, and

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mentioned Indonesia as a good example of this, but conceded that the GOA needed to do more about points-of-entry airports, such as Bali's Denpasar Airport. OTS Deputy Secretary Andrew Wilson, noting there have been two incidents of security concern since December 25, where passengers have "slipped through" the system, remarked that system failure is not just a problem in the developing world. National Security Advisor (NSA) Duncan Lewis reinforced the issue of improving security at last ports of call.

¶ 9. (S/NF) NSA Lewis noted the close and long-standing relationships between U.S. and Australian security agencies, and suggested both countries leverage existing links to full capacity before adding new coordination mechanisms. In response to NSA Lewis' suggestion that the G-20 could serve as a forum for the Ministerial, D/S Lute stressed the need to ensure that the organization chosen for the work be a "load-bearing instrument". D/S Lute opined that this effort would benefit from a Sherpa process to ensure that what happens at the ministerial will be of substance.

¶ 10. (S/NF) NSA Lewis noted that, as a direct-result of the attempted Christmas-day attack, Prime Minister Rudd tasked him to conduct a comprehensive review to ensure the Australian intelligence community can "connect the dots." (Note: NSA Lewis also fills the role of integrating efforts within the Australian intelligence community -- roughly equivalent to DNI in the U.S. End Note.) He must report back to PM Rudd within the next two weeks and was clearly

interested in obtaining the results of the U.S. review to inform his work. His office also intends to issue a national Counterterrorism White Paper in the January/February timeframe.

¶11. (S/NF) Comment: D/S Lute's visit was extremely well-received by Minister Albanese and the other Australian officials. They said that it demonstrated that the U.S. was consulting with them on an issue important to the Australian public and gave them the opportunity to show the public they were doing something about the problem. National Security Advisor Lewis posited to Charge Clune after the meetings that the G-20 could, by endorsing this effort in very general terms at the multilateral level, enable regional bodies like the APEC aviation security working group and the association of Asia Pacific airports to carry out working-level functions and achieve more substantive cooperation, along the lines of the regional bodies of the Financial Action Taskforce launched by the G-8.

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